

recorded to their everlasting honour. Why have you reason, unless you exercise it about the study of God's will? Take this course, it will convince you of error, or establish you in the truth: in either case, great will be your satisfaction and peace. You cannot be faithful to Christ, unless you enquire into his mind, and take *his word*, not the interpretations and doctrines of men, for your rule. Nothing is so interesting, so important, as religion. And what account will you give another day, if you have held even the true gospel doctrine, only out of reverence to the judgment of men, and not as the effect of an enquiry into the revelation itself? Do, my brethren, pay these remonstrances a candid and serious regard. With sincere affection, I commend you to the blessing and assistance of God, and to the sacred influence of *the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.*

One devout wish, and I have done. May you, Sir, and I, and the respective people to whom we minister, be lead into all truth, and find acceptance and mercy with our common Lord and Judge at his coming! I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your humble Servant, and Brother,

J. TOULMIN.

F I N I S.

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

P L Y M O U T H,

AUGUST 7, 1785,

TO A CONGREGATION OF

PROTESTANT DISSENTERS,

On entering upon the Discharge of the PASTORAL
OFFICE among them.

By THOMAS WATSON, JUN.

L O N D O N,

PRINTED BY A. RIVINGTON AND J. MARSHALL.

MDCCCLXXXV.

A.

S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

P I Y M O U T H

AUGUST 17 1850

BY THE REV. J. W. WALKER

OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY

AND OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

AND OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY ANGELS

TO THE
CONGREGATION
OF
PROTESTANT DISSENTERS,
ASSEMBLING IN
BROAD-STREET, PLYMOUTH,
THIS SERMON,
PRINTED AT THEIR REQUEST,
IS
MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY
THEIR AFFECTIONATE BROTHER
AND
SERVANT IN THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST,

THOMAS WATSON, JUN.

PLYMOUTH,
Nov. 7, 1785.

REPORT OF
THE
COMMISSIONER
OF
THE
BUREAU OF
INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE

FOR THE
YEAR
1904

WASHINGTON
1905

U. S. GOVERNMENT
PRINTING OFFICE

100-100000

J A M E S i. 22.

Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

IN the earlier days of the christian church, when our religion appeared in full splendour; when it was accompanied by the charm of novelty, and confirmed by repeated miracles; when our Saviour's life and conversation were still imprinted on the minds of his followers, and every returning day confirmed the truth and excellency of the new religion; even at this time, within the influence and under the preaching of the apostles, there existed disciples, whose professions were insincere, whose religion was formal. Then, as now, a firm belief in a particular set of doctrines, a rigid attendance upon public worship, a strict punctuality in private devotion, were too often considered as the evidences of that temper, which can only be manifested by justice and fidelity, humanity and the love of God. Against notions of this nature the text is directly levelled; and in the following verses the apostle clearly proves, that the performance of devotional service will be at-

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tended with little benefit, unless it be dictated by the heart. A truth so important in itself, so interesting in its consequences, furnishes no improper subject for meditation at the present season. I now appear before you in the character of your minister; and I cannot better commence my public services, than by exhorting you, in the language of St. James, "to be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

May that great Being, without whose assistance Paul may plant, and Apollos may water in vain, accompany with his blessing these and all my sincere endeavours for the promotion of your best interests, and the advancement of his glory!

In the farther prosecution of this discourse, I shall briefly treat on the exhortation of the text, and then shew the manner in which the public services of religion should be discharged, in order to secure a compliance with the advice it contains.

There is no error more dangerous, and few more universal, than the substitution of ceremonial observances, in the room of purity of life, and righteousness of practice. Into this mistake the Jews were continually falling; and not small is the number of Christians who have imitated their example. The stress laid upon ceremonial observances was highly blameable in the former, in the latter far more blameable. The worship of the *law* was pompous and splendid, that of the *gospel* is simple and plain. The first abounded in rites
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and ceremonies, the other hath few positive institutions. The Jews, therefore, might plead the natural tendency of their religion; the Christians are entirely without excuse.

That a strict compliance with the ordinances, will by no means compensate for a deficiency in the spirit of religion, is demonstrable by reason. That an exact performance of ritual duty, a punctual attendance upon public worship, a fervent zeal for certain articles of faith, will not supply the place of real piety, is the repeated affirmation of Scripture. "To what purpose is the
 " multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the
 " Lord? I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams,
 " and the fat of fed beasts; I delight not in the
 " blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.
 " When ye come to appear before me, who hath
 " required this at your hand to tread my courts?
 " Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an
 " abomination to me; the new-moons and sabbaths,
 " the calling of assemblies, I cannot away
 " with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.
 " Your new-moons and your appointed feasts my
 " soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am
 " weary to bear them. But wash ye, make ye
 " clean: put away the evil of your doings from
 " before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to
 " do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed,
 " judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."
 Isaiah i. 11, 12, &c.

In the Law, under the operation of which this strong and nervous language was conceived, the perfections of the Almighty were partially displayed. In the Gospel his true character is unfolded, and the services he requires clearly ascertained. God, saith our Saviour, is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. To the same purport are all the injunctions of christianity: and for the promotion of this end, its external institutions are admirably adapted. The design of every rite is, to inspire the heart with submission and gratitude to God, with love and affection to mankind; and the disciple who is destitute of these virtues, hath little profited by the law of Christ: neglectful of the substance, he hath pursued a shadow; busied about concerns of small moment, he hath overlooked the one thing needful. For no ceremonial performances, no bodily exercises, are pleasing to God, any farther than as they are useful to ourselves. Where they excite good dispositions, and animate to virtuous conduct, there only they meet his approbation.

Therefore, my fellow-christians, examine yourselves. Review the motives from which you engage in the public and private duties of religion: beware lest you substitute the outward act, in the room of the inward temper: do not imagine, that a strict observance of ordinances will supply the place of moral duty: remember, the one is the means, the other the end: recollect, that the re-
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wards of christianity, are not annexed to the bare hearing, but to the doing of the word: for it is the assertion of our great Master, that not every one who saith unto him, " Lord, Lord, shall enter " into the kingdom of heaven, but he only who " doth the will of his Father who is in heaven."

Having thus briefly considered the leading idea of the text, I proceed to shew, secondly, in what manner, and with what dispositions, we should perform the public services of religion, if we be solicitous that they should affect our hearts, and influence our lives.

In the first place, let them be attended with constancy. In this assembly I shall not enlarge on the reasonableness, or obligation of public worship; trusting that I am speaking to persons, who are not only convinced of both, but who discover their conviction by their practice. So long as mankind shall be connected by the ties of society, or united by nature and interest; so long as they shall feel common wants, or experience common cares; so long it will be their duty to meet together, for the purpose of addressing their common Parent, and confirming their obedience to his will. The propriety of this conduct is evident, and it is impossible to avoid perceiving it: wonderful, therefore, is the behaviour of numbers who frequently absent themselves from the house, though they would be thought to credit the existence, and believe in the perfections of the Deity.

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Whilst such is their practice, their professions must be suspicious. It is impossible to conceive rightly of God, without expressing our conceptions by suitable acts. If he be believed, he will be feared; if he be known, he will be loved; if he be loved, he will be worshipped. The reasons which enforce an attendance upon the public services of religion for once, enforce it perpetually; the obligation is the same at all times, and can never cease to operate; the relation we bear to God continually subsists; the theme of praise is inexhaustible; the blessings of heaven daily descend on our heads. The allurements of the world frequently solicit our attention; the snares of sin demand unremit-
 ted vigilance. In this situation, is not the steady performance of devotional duties not only highly reasonable, but absolutely necessary? Too manifest is the fact, that if they be entirely neglected, or even partially discharged, forgetfulness of God, and disobedience to his laws, quickly succeed. The avocations of business, or pleasure, efface impressions which once were lively; virtue loses her attractions, and religion her charms; temptations no longer meet with resistance, and the interests of a future world are sacrificed to the pleasures of the present. This, though a melancholy, is a true representation of the consequences attending the neglect of religious worship. Frightful and unhappy as they are, may they duly impress your minds! Never may you devote that time to pleasure,

sure, or business, which should be employed in publicly worshipping God, and attending to the instructions of his word. If you wish to be doers, be constant hearers of the word. Reflect, that the welfare of your souls is of more consequence than the relaxation of your bodies, and the favour of God more desirable than the extension of your trade.

Secondly, the public services of religion should be engaged in with seriousness. Without this qualification, they can neither be acceptable to God, nor useful to ourselves: on the contrary, they will harden the heart, and increase condemnation. Omniscience cannot be deceived with outward forms, nor virtuous dispositions be strengthened by the motion of the lips. The service in which the mind is not engaged, can have little influence on the regulation of life. The prayer in which sincerity hath no part, can never be acceptable to the God of truth. To please the Deity, he must be worshipped with fervour; to reap the benefits of religious ordinances, they must be the acts of the heart. Hypocrisy is at no time so detestable, as when it enters the church: lightness of manners, and levity of mind, are never so improper, as when carried into the immediate presence of God. To address the Creator and Preserver of our lives, with a lie upon the lips, is presumption in the extreme. To approach the first and most exalted of all beings, in a trifling or careless

careless manner, is a mockery the most solemn. Sincerity and seriousness are indispensably necessary when we worship the Lord of heaven and earth; for he cannot be deceived, neither will he be mocked. Be persuaded then, my brethren, to enter this house with seriousness, and behave in it with propriety; worship God with fervour of affection, and solemnity of manner; let not the wandering eye, or drowsy posture, betray the inattention of your minds. Come not here for amusement, but instruction; come not here to trifle, but to attend; come not here to quiet the reproaches of conscience, but from a sincere desire of increasing in virtue; come not here to criticise on the preacher, or to furnish yourselves with matter for useless debate with your fellow-christians, but for the more important purposes of worshipping the Almighty in sincerity, and confirming your obedience to his will. To conclude this head with the advice of Solomon, "Keep your feet when you go to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to offer the sacrifice of fools."

To render our public services useful, they should, in the third place, be reviewed with attention. Though the services of religion be attended with constancy, and discharged with seriousness, yet if the remembrance be dismissed with the performance of them, their influence on the conduct will be inconsiderable. Emotions which are not cultivated, will quickly subside; convictions

tions which are not pursued, will speedily be forgotten. Impressions to be lasting, must be fostered with care; resolutions to be kept, must be recalled with frequency; truths which are not considered, may as well not be known; acts of worship which are not reviewed, may without detriment be omitted. The sole design of the external institutions, is, to promote the internal spirit of religion; which they will never effect, if the dispositions they raise be not carried out of the church. If, my brethren, you desire to render your attendance upon the house of God pleasing and beneficial, frequently reflect on the prayers you offer, and the truths you hear; seriously consider the impressions you feel, and the resolutions you form: let this be your conduct, and your piety will influence your practice. Whilst you worship your Creator, you will not omit your duty towards your brethren; whilst you reverence religion, you will not disregard morality. Walking humbly with your God, you will do justice, love mercy, visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction, and keep yourselves unspotted from the world.

Be persuaded then, as you reverence and love the best of Beings; as you feel any gratitude, or would ascribe any praise; as you wish to resist temptation, or desire to increase in goodness; as you would enjoy the blessings of the world, and inherit the happiness of heaven; to be exact in your attendance upon the stated forms of religion; to be sincere and serious in the worship of your

God; to be rigid and impartial in the examination of yourselves. Thus, whilst habits of piety and virtue are formed within you, you will grow more and more like unto the Deity, experience his favour in the present life, and be admitted to his blisful presence in that which is to come.

Having concluded the observations I proposed to derive from the text, I beg leave to advert to a subject which is by no means unconnected with it: and though what I am about to say, may relate chiefly to myself, I doubt not but it will be heard with patience, and received with candour.

You, my friends, have chosen me as the conductor of your public religious services, and in that capacity I now appear before you. Fully sensible of the honour you have done me, and convinced of the importance of the office I am called to fill, gratitude and duty render me anxious to secure the continuance of your esteem. Influenced by these motives, I shall apply to the work which lies before me with diligence; and happy shall I be, if, through the blessing of God, my labour be crowned with success. The object I aim at is your spiritual improvement; and to this end all my endeavours will be directed. Let me then affectionately and earnestly entreat you to attend the external means of religion with constancy and seriousness, with sincerity and attention. This conduct will be useful to yourselves, and pleasing to me: you will advance in the graces of the christian life, and I shall be rendered the
happy

happy instrument of promoting your eternal welfare. Trusting that you will comply with my wishes, I shall in the course of my ministry insist upon those truths only, which have an evident tendency to render you more grateful and obedient to God, more affectionate and beneficent to mankind: and whilst I know that I am accountable to that great Being, to whose service I have devoted my life, I think I shall not flatter, and I hope I shall not deceive. I appeal to my heart, I appeal to Him who searcheth my heart, that I preach not myself, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and myself your servant for his sake. I aspire not to the guidance of your faith, or the direction of your consciences; my ambition terminates in being the helper of your joy. With truth I can affirm, that I wish not yours, but you. Your advancement in holiness will abundantly compensate for any disadvantages to which I may be exposed, and ever constitute my chief felicity.

With these views, and these hopes, my brethren, I commence my public services: the accomplishment of them, you must be sensible, depends upon yourselves. The encouragement you give me will determine my success: the affection you bear me will regulate my comfort. As it will be my endeavour to discover and enforce the will of Christ, I doubt not but it will be yours to attend my preaching with regularity, and to receive it with candour. As a man, and especially as a young man, I expect not to be free from mistakes and indis-

indiscretions : all I boast is an honest intention, and a heart sincerely devoted to your service. In the course of my duty, should I advance any thing which may appear novel or ill-founded, do not hastily blame me : try all I deliver by the only rule of faith and practice, the Scriptures ; and if, upon mature enquiry, you do not find it there, reject it without hesitation. Yet let me not be censured ; let me not be slighted ; consider me as an upright, though a mistaken man ; and whilst you judge for yourselves, allow me the same privilege. To conclude, pardon my errors, overlook my deficiencies, and favourably receive my sincere attempts for the promotion of your immortal interests. Let your hearts and your prayers attend me ; and let us all firmly resolve, and constantly endeavour to keep consciences void of offence towards God and towards men ; to work out our salvation with fear and trembling ; to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

And now, O thou greatest and best of Beings ! in whose hands are all our ways, and upon whose good pleasure depends the success of all our undertakings, look down from heaven and visit this vine, and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted. Direct the way of thy servant unto this people. Let them be his hope and comfort in the present life, his joy and crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus at his coming ! Amen and Amen.

T H E E N D.